Upscaling SLM by proving overall benefits and improving knowledge sharing and evidence-based decision making

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Even though SLM is at the core of global issues with regards to food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, water conflict resolution and even migration, its value and importance is not being duly recognized by policymakers and the broad public. This is hampering the allocation of sufficient resources to combat land degradation and scale up SLM. Despite the fact that information and data on land degradation and SLM is growing worldwide, there is not enough proven evidence on the overall impacts as well as the benefits of SLM. This poses a major constraint for SLM to be recognized at the local, national, and global level. Land system science must take this challenge and provide more evidence about the overall benefits of local land use transitions such as SLM. While the Land System Science has so far focused on observation of change and understanding the drivers of these changes, it is currently trying to integrate the design of sustainable transformations. Sustainable Land Management can thus be considered as a solution from practice to Land System Science developments.

Apart from insufficient knowledge about on- and off-site impacts there is also a constraint in knowledge management and sharing and using it for informed decision making. However, there is a wealth of knowledge about sustainable land management practices world-wide, but this valuable knowledge has not been sufficiently evaluated, shared and channelled into evidence-based decision-making processes. Indeed, proper knowledge management is crucial for SLM to reach its full potential.